



A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC DETERMINANTS OF ONLINE SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR OF CONSUMERS

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ABSTRACT

The internet revolution has brought about a paradigm shift in the way things are done. The Internet and worldwide web (www) have dramatically changed the way consumers seek and use information. The Internet, which was earlier conceptualized as a tool for enmeshing information, has become an important place of business these days. Internet has become an important and indispensable part of human life. The present paper focuses on the online shopping behaviour of the consumers. The demographic determinants studied in the paper include- age, marital status, gender, income and access to internet service. A self prepared questionnaire was used to collect data from 100 respondents selected on the basis of judgement and further snowball sampling was used to approach the consumers. t- test was used to assess the significant difference among the demographic variables. The findings of the study showed significant difference in the online shopping behavior of the consumers in relation to age and gender. Whereas, income of the consumers and their marital status were not found to have a significant impact on the online shopping behavior.

KEYWORDS: Internet, Shopping Behavior.

INTRODUCTION

Online shopping is a form of electronics commerce which allows consumers to directly purchase products or services from seller over the internet using web browser. Online shopping provides all type of goods to be available in the virtual world. It is just like a shop in the neighborhood, selling all types of goods but with some prominent difference. Here one can access these shops any time without stepping out of their home /office. It can be accessed any time when you are on the move, relaxing in your home or having a time out at your office. Here all the products are displayed with the price and detailed mention of the features. Potential customers can have a look at them, analyze what other similar online shopping outlets are offering and can get the best deal out of it. With the long working hours and increased distances to travel, individuals do not have enough time to devote to shopping and don't feel like going out for buying day to day things after a very hectic day at office. They want to reserve it for other works like socializing, entertainment etc. Now the companies are coming up with an alternative way so that this section of society can be tapped to the maximum and online shopping is only way to attract them by just giving a click away and that too at any time 24X7. Moreover, this is located in the virtual world and can be accessed any time when the customers are watching their favourite TV show or having a coffee break at office. This is the online shopping concept.

A survey was conducted by MasterCard worldwide, (December 2008), on 5037 respondents across 10 markets: Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, UAE and South Africa. It revealed that Online shopping in the Asia-Pacific region is accelerating at an annual rate of 23.3 percent to hit US \$168.7 billion by 2011, with the region's new markets such as China and India fuelling this growth. MasterCard Worldwide published its latest Insights Report, "Economic Crisis and Preference for Online Shopping in Asia/Pacific, Middle East and Africa", which showed that in India the average frequency of online purchases increased to 2.9 in fourth quarter of 2008, up from 2.6 during the same quarter in 2007.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Over time the Internet buyer, once considered the innovator or early adopter, has changed. While innovator professional male buyers with higher educational levels, incomes, tolerance for risk, social status and a lower dependence on the mass media used to patronize established retail channels (Ernst & Young, 2001; Mahajan, Muller & Bass, 1990), today's Internet buyer shows a diversity of income and education (U. S. Dept. of Commerce, 2003). For Internet buyers, gender, marital status, residential location, age, education, and household income were frequently found to be important predictors of Internet purchasing (Fram & Grady, 1997; Kunz, 1997; Mehta & Sivadas, 1995; Sultan & Henrichs, 2000). Sultan and Henrichs (2000) reported that the consumer's willingness to and preference for adopting the Internet as his or her shopping medium was positively related to income, household size, and innovativeness.

ACNielsen (2009) conducted a study on 21,100 respondents from 38 markets across the globe and revealed that more Indians are taking to shopping online. The study visualised an upward trend in online shopping across the world. A significant observation of this study was that India beat the global competitors in the market of number of purchases per month, with a mean of 5.2 purchases against the global average of 4.9. In India, books followed airline reservations closely, with 35% of citizens buying them online. Nearly 24% have bought electronic items and more than 20% have purchased items such as apparel, music and elec-

tronic entertainment items such as movies, DVDs and games.

Dahiya Richa (2012) collected data through Questionnaires on a sample of 580 respondents from Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad and Bangalore. The results of study revealed that on-line shopping in India is significantly affected by various demographic factors like age, gender, marital status, family size and income.

Agarwal, Seema (2014) conducted a study on online shopping behaviour of 200 respondents from Mumbai Region. The results revealed that there was a quite strong correlation between age and attitude towards online shopping, i.e. elderly people are not so keen to shop online. Also high positive correlation between education and attitudes towards online shopping was found which indicates that higher education makes online shopping more attractive. The study also indicated that 60% of the online consumers are males.

OBJECTIVES

To study the impact of demographic factors on on-line shopping behaviour of consumers in the city of Delhi.

HYPOTHESES

H1: There will be no significant difference in the online shopping behaviour of consumer with different age groups.

H2: There will be no significant difference in the online shopping behaviour of male and female consumers.

H3: There will be no significant difference in the online shopping behaviour of married and unmarried consumers.

H4: There will be no significant difference in the online shopping behaviour of consumers with different income groups.

H5: There will be no significant difference in the online shopping behaviour of consumers with internet access and those without internet access.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data collection

A combination of Interview method and Questionnaire method has been used to collect data from the respondents.

Sampling technique

Judgment and snowball sampling were used. Initial set of respondents was selected on the basis of judgement sampling. Subsequently additional units were obtained on the basis of information given by initial sample units and then further referrals were taken from those selected in the sample. Judgement sampling was based on the parameter that only those individuals were selected who had ever done online shopping.

Sample

Random Sampling method has been used to collect data from 100 respondents.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

t- test was used to assess the significant difference among the demographic variables.

Online shopping was measured as responses of consumers towards purchase of different types of products on the Internet in the past. Five product categories were identified from the exploratory study which comprised of:

- Airline/train reservations
- Banking and other financial services
- Software/Hardware/DVD/CD
- Dresses/Apparels/ Footwear/Jewellery
- Electronics/Mobile phones

Respondents were asked to recall purchases they had made for various categories of the products in last six months. They were also asked to recall the amount spent on online purchases, frequency of purchase on the Internet and number of items purchased in online shopping.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected through questionnaire and interview were analysed by using 't-test' for testing significant difference among the mean values. The results are discussed below:

H1: There will be no significant difference in the online shopping behaviour of consumer having different age groups.

Table 1 : t- value for online shopping behaviour of individuals from different age groups

AGE	N	MEAN VALUE	t- VALUE
20-35 Years	40	13.38	2.38*
35-50 Years	60	11.56	

*Table value at 0.05 level with df=98= 1.98

It can be seen from Table 1 that t-value works out to 2.38 which is significant at 0.05 level. This shows that there exists significant difference in the online shopping behaviour of consumers with respect to age. Individuals in the age group of 20-35 years are more prone to online shopping (M=13.38) as compared to individuals above 35 years of age (M=11.56).

H2: There will be no significant difference in the online shopping behaviour of male and female consumers.

Table 2: t- value for online shopping behaviour of males and females

GENDER	N	MEAN VALUE	t- VALUE
Male	50	12.56	2.03*
Female	50	9.23	

*Table value at 0.05 level with df=98= 1.98

Table 2 shows a significant difference in the shopping behaviour of males and females (t-value-2.03, which is significant at 0.05 level). From the table it can be interpreted that males are more inclined towards the online shopping compared to females.

The above findings are contrary to the results of research conducted by Pew Research Centre in 2001; which stated that the number of women (58%) who bought online exceeded the number of men (42%) by 16%. Among the woman who bought, 37% reported enjoying the experience "a lot" compared to only 17% of male shoppers who enjoyed the experience "a lot".

H3: There will be no significant difference in the online shopping behaviour of married and unmarried consumer.

Table 3: t- value for online shopping behaviour of married and unmarried individuals

MARITAL STATUS	N	MEAN VALUE	t- VALUE
Married	39	11.23	1.72
Unmarried	61	13.52	

*Table value at 0.05 level with df=98= 1.98

When it comes to predicting the online shopping behaviour of married and unmarried persons, it was observed from table 3 that there is no significant difference. This means that both married and unmarried individuals are prone to online shopping and possess the same shopping behavior.

H4: There will be no significant difference in the online shopping behaviour of consumer with different income groups.

Table 4: t- value for online shopping behaviour of individuals from different income groups

INCOME	N	MEAN VALUE	t- VALUE
<50,000 p.m	60	9.36	1.36
Above 50,000 p.m	40	11.21	

*Table value at 0.05 level with df=98= 1.98

The t-value for online shopping behaviour of individuals from two income groups (less than 50,000 and more than 50,000) is not significant. This shows that income is not an important determinant in online shopping behaviour of individuals. Earlier studies done by Sultan and Henrichs in 2000 reported that the consumer's willingness to and preference for adopting the Internet as his or her shopping medium was positively related to income. But the results of the present study show that income as one of the variables of demographic factor doesn't impact online shopping in Indian context.

H5: There will be no significant difference in the online shopping behaviour of consumer with internet access and those without internet access.

Table 5: t- value for online shopping behaviour of individuals with access and no access to internet

POSSESSION	N	MEAN VALUE	t- VALUE
Access to Internet Service	79	13.23	2.59*
No Access to Internet Service	21	9.36	

*Table value at 0.05 level with df=98= 1.98

Table 5 shows that there is significant difference in the mean value of individuals with access to internet and those with no access to internet service. Individuals with access to internet service are more involved in online shopping (M= 13.23) as compared to those with no access to internet service (M= 9.36).

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the present study are:

- Individuals in the age group of 20-35 years are more involved in online shopping as compared to their counterparts above 35 years of age.
- Males are more inclined towards online shopping as compared to females.
- Marital status of consumers is not an important determinant for online shopping behavior.
- Income does not play an important role in determining the online shopping behaviour of consumers.
- Consumers with access to internet are more prone to online shopping.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The results of the study can be utilized by practitioners in relooking or revamping their strategies for online shopping.
2. Online websites should pay more attention to the segments other than females as results prove that males shop more in online shopping as compared to females.
3. Online retailers should also look into the possibility of running call centres which could ensure that the customer gets a chance to formally interact with the proposed buyer before the actual purchase.

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